

The Begger-Boy of the North:
Whose linage and calling toth' world is proclaim'd,
Which is to be sung to a Tune so nam'd.



From ancient pedigree by due descent,
I well can deriue my generation,
Throughtout all Christendome and also Kent:
my calling is known both in Terrene and Vacation,
My Parents old taught me to be bold,
He neuer be daunted what euer is spoken,
Where ere I come my custome I hold,
and cry, Good your worship bestow one token.

In ragged rayments I wander about,
both hot and cold weather I'm arm'd to endure,
Though but a Boy I am sturdy and stout,
a living by begging I easily procure:
My skin is made like armour of proofe,
by Sun nor by frost 't will neuer be broken,
No threatening I shall keep me aloofe,
but still I will cry, Good your worship one token.

My Father my Mother, my Grandire and Grannum,
my Uncles, my Aunts, and all my kindred,
Did maund for I oure, casum and pannum,
then wherefore should I from the Trade be hindred
Cat will to kind, the plover the doth say,
'tis pittie old customes should be broken,
Still as I wander along on the way,
He cry, good your worship bestow one token.

Although in the Quier-ken I haue been oft,
and by the Runcoc and the Harmanbecke frighted;
Yet my old Trade I will let aloft,
wherein all my linage haue chiefly delighted,
I haue eat shame, and drunke after the same,
I little regard what to me is spoken,
And in the streets my mind I proclaime,
and cry, good your worship bestow one token.

To whet your charity, I haue a tricke,
a tricke said I, nay I haue a hundred,
With a Cap on my head, I can saue to be sicke,
to see my strange gestures the people haue wonderd
I can counterfeit a lame arme or a legge,
and sometimes I leeme like one that is broken,
This must be doe that exactly will begge,
and cry, good your worship bestow one token.

I can hold my fingers as though they were lame,
lest people should say I were able to labour,
And vnder a hedge along I can frame,
as though it were writ by the Iustices sanour;
From Parish to Parish along as I come,
my wants in blacke and white are spoken,
Go where I will I am alwayes at home;
and still I doe cry, good your worship one token.

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The second part. To the same Tune.



The Crow her own bird doth deem the most faire,
and so doe I of my profession;
If I were adopted a rich mans Heire,
this life of my heart hath tane such possession,
That I should leane my livings and lands,
and see like a Citizen when he is broken,
I cannot abide to worke with my hands,
but still I must cry, good your worship one token.

The richest spiser that liueth this day,
hath not so much ground as I at disposing,
My fields lye open as the high way.
I wrong not the Country by greedy inclosing,
I spend what I get, and get what I spend,
all this for certaine which I haue spoken,
I am no other than what I pretend,
for still doe I cry, good your worship one token.

I am not in debt, there's good reason therefore,
for no man will credit me with halfe a shilling,
and yet if I chance to runne on the skore,
to pay for my booz of all things I am willing,
When I with my spates at the bouzing ken meet,
our baines with strong liquoz soundly are token,
And when I want towe then I step intoth street,
and cry, good your worship bestow one token.

In the heat of the Summer I lead a fine life,
to walke the green meadowes for my recreation,
And when I am old enough to haue a wife,
Ile toyne with my dorie on the wandring fashion,
Under a hedge I can lye and snozt,
by no worldly cares my sleepe is broken,
And now and then I repaire to the Court,
where I doe beg greater gits than a token.

All the cold winter I keepe rendezous,
in an old spacious barne by beggers frequented,
Or else in the bouzing ken I doe carouse,
and to lib in strummell I am well contented,
I am not proud nor high in conceit,
though some beggers are so as it is spoken;
I care more for drinke than for cloathing or weat,
which makes me cry, good your worship one token.

In the South Countrey I first had my birth:
from whence I came naked unto London City,
Where a good fellow compos'd all of mirth,
upon the poore Boy did take some pitty,
And now he hath cloath'd me in blacke and white,
and mended my rags which before were broken:
If this my Ditty will peld you delight,
I shall thanke you more than I would for a token.

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FINIS.